

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-02 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 NIC-01

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R 021605Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6466

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

DIA WASHDC

USMISSION NATO

USCINCEUR

AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ATHENS 8596

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV PINT GR

SUBJ: REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN ON MONARCHY ENTERS FINAL WEEK

1. SUMMARY. AS CAMPAIGN ON WHETHER GREECE WILL BECOME CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY OR PRESIDENTIAL REPUBLIC ENTERS FINAL WEEK BOTH SIDES SHARE RESPONSIBILITY FOR HAVING FUMBLE STRATEGIES AND PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS LEAVING ELECTORATE RATHER LETHARGIC, WITH MANY STILL UNDECIDED. NEWSPAPERS CONTINUE TO DEBATE MONARCHY/REPUBLIC ISSUE ON EDITORIAL PAGES WHILE RADIO/TV PRESENTATIONS CONSTITUTE HISTORY OF MISSED OPPORTUNITIES BY BOTH POSITIONS. KING CONSTANTINE IS SCHEDULED TO MAKE FINAL APPEAL FOR SUPPORT DECEMBER 6 WHILE OPPOSITION MAY APPEAR TWICE MORE ON TV NETWORK. ANTI-ROYALIST DUST-UP NOVEMBER 29 BROUGHT HARSH OFFICIAL REACTION AND WAS DEPLORED BY POLITICAL LEADERS. END SUMMARY.

2. INTENSITY WITH WHICH GREEKS TRADITIONALLY REGARD
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MONARCHY/REPUBLIC QUESTION AND WHICH HAS BITTERLY DIVIDED

NATIONAL POLITICAL LIFE THIS CENTURY SEEMS LARGELY ABSENT FROM CURRENT CAMPAIGN. AS GREEK ELECTORATE PREPARES TO GO TO POLLS DECEMBER 8, VOTER INTEREST IS SPURRED ONLY BY SPOT RADIO/TV PRESENTATIONS, PER-
FUNCTORY EDITORIALS, AND MINIMAL CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES BY PROTAGONISTS OF BOTH SIDES. NEW DEMOCRACY ADHERES TO STRICT NEUTRAL POSITION AS DECLARED BY PM CARAMANLIS WHICH HAS PROMPTED OPINION COLUMNISTS TO REMARK THAT THIS IS FIRST PLEBISCITE BEING FOUGHT ALMOST IN ABSENCE OF POLITICAL PARTIES. THIS OBSERVATION CAME AFTER GEORGE MAVROS (CU/NF) AND ANDREAS PAPANDREOU (PASOK) OPTED TO FOREGO PERSONALLY STATING THEIR PARTIES' SUPPORT FOR REPUBLIC ON RADIO/TV. VOTERS COMPLAIN THEY LACK GUIDANCE FROM PARTY LEADERS, AND RECENTLY-ELECTED DEPUTIES TELL US THEY ARE UNDER INCREASING PRESSURE FROM CONSTITUENTS SEEKING COUNSEL. QUESTIONS OF HOW CONSTITUTION WOULD BE AMENDED TO IMPLEMENT OUTCOME OF DECEMBER 8 VOTING AND OF IDENTITY OF POSSIBLE CANDIDATES FOR PRESIDENCY SHOULD MONARCHY BE VOTED DOWN ALSO TROUBLE MORE SOPHISTICATED ELECTORATE. MANY VOTERS, MONETHELESS, CLING TO LONG-HELD VIEWS ON THIS ISSUE INCLUDING POPULAR REASONING AMONG ROYALISTS THAT KING REPRESENTS NATIONAL SHIELD AGAINST COMMUNISM. SAME PRO-MONARCHISTS ARGUE THAT SHOULD ANDREAS PAPANDREOU BE ELECTED PREMIER IN FUTURE ONLY PROTECTION AGAINST COMMUNISM WOULD BE KING SINCE PAPANDREOU WOULD PRESUMABLY BE IN TANDEM WITH PRESIDENT OF SAME PERSUASION. BALANCING REASONING THAT KING WOULD BE KNOWN FACTOR AGAINST COMMUNISM ARE FREQUENT ARGUMENTS THAT KING'S MOTHER, WHOSE IMAGE AS PORTRAYED BY REPUBLICANS IS SOMETHING BETWEEN A GORGON MEDUSA AND MEDEA, WOULD RETURN AND THAT EXPENSIVE CEREMONIAL MONARCH HAS NO PLACE IN 20TH CENTURY GREECE WHICH HAS NEVER HAD NATIVE ARISTOCRACY NOR NOBILITY.

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-02 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 NIC-01

/056 W

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R 021605Z DEC 74
FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6467
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
DIA WASHDC
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3. NEWSPAPER EDITORIALS REFLECT THESE VIEWPOINTS WITH VRADYNI MIRRORING ND POSITION IN DECLARING THAT VOTERS SHOULD BE LEFT FREE TO MAKE OWN DECISION. IT REMINDED PUBLIC THAT ISSUE OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE PREROGATIVES AND CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM SHOULD NOT BE FORGOTTEN. AKROPOLIS CALLED FOR NATIONAL UNITY AND COMMENTED THAT CHOICE BETWEEN SWEDISH-TYPE KING AND DE GAULLE TYPE PRESIDENT SHOULD BE VIEWED AGAINST BACKGROUND OF STRONG DEMOCRACY. AVQHI REMAINING LOYAL TO COMMUNIST STAND APPEALED TO ELECTORATE TO EXERCISE ITS RIGHT AND TO VOTE DECEMBER 8 FOR GREEN PRINT BALLOT (BALLOT FOR REPUBLIC WILL HAVE GREEN LETTERING, FOR MONARCHY BROWN PRINT). TO VIMA (LIBERAL) WROTE THAT CROWN BRINGS NEITHER UNITY NOR GUARANTEE OF STABILITY, WHILE KATHIMERINI SERMONIZED THAT WHICHEVER WAY BALLOTING GOES PEOPLE WILL BE VICTORS. POLITICAL THEMES COLUMNIST NOTED POTENTIALLY DIVISIVE EFFECT IF VOTING IS CLOSE, I.E. IF FORTY PERCENT AGAINST MONARCHY THEN THESE PERSONS WILL BE DISAPPOINTED TO SEE KING CONSTANTINE RETURN. ATHINAIKI DIRECTED MORE CONFIDENTIAL

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PERSONAL ATTACK AGAINST CONSTANTINE, RECALLING THAT HISTORY OF EUROPEAN ROYALTY IS BLOODY HISTORY OF MACHINATIONS, ABOMINABLE CRIMES, MURDERS WITHIN FAMILIES; IT QUESTIONED WHETHER CONSTANTINE CONSIDERED THAT HE REPRESENTED MODEL FAMILY WHEN HIS BROTHER-IN-LAW LICKS BOOTS OF DEBILITATED DICTATOR IN ORDER TO TAKE THRONE FROM HIS OWN FATHER AND QUEEN MOTHER FREDERIKA DOES NOT SPEAK TO HER OWN MOTHER BECAUSE OF PETTY MONEY SQUABBLES.

4. CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES GRIND ALONG IN DESULTORY MANNER WITH MONARCHIST CENTERS HANDING OUT HANDSOME PHOTOS OF ROYAL FAMILY AND "NAI" (YES) STICKERS WHICH ARE USUALLY ACCOMPANIED WITH INSCRIPTION "FOR CROWNED DEMOCRACY - CONSTANTINE." VARIOUS REPUBLICAN ORGANIZATIONS HAVE APPEARED AND REPORTEDLY WILL FEATURE SPEAKERS THROUGHOUT

NATION CHAMPIONING CAUSE OF "UNCROWNED DEMOCRACY."
HIGHLIGHT OF CAMPAIGN WAS TO BE REGULARLY SCHEDULED SPOT
RADIO/TV PRESENTATIONS OF BOTH POSITIONS BY POLITICAL
LEADERS. HOWEVER, NEW DEMOCRACY FROM BEGINNING HAS KEPT
TO STRICTLY NEUTRAL POSITION; CU/NF LEADER MAVROS AND
PASOK PAPANDREOU HAVE DUCKED OUT OF TV INTERVIEWS AND
MONARCHISTS HAVE TURNED DOWN ONE PROGRAM THIS WEEK CLAIMING
THEY ARE NOT PREPARED. LESSER KNOWN COMMUNIST LEADER
LEONIDAS KYRKOS SPOKE ON BEHALF OF LEFTISTS NOVEMBER 29
CLAIMING THAT MONARCHY WAS OUTMODED INSTITUTION IDENTIFIED
WITH DARKEST PAGES OF GREEK HISTORY. MEANWHILE KKE
PROTESTED HAVING TO SHARE BROADCAST TIME WITH KKE (INTERIOR)
(EXTERIOR)/AND EDA, GIVING FURTHER CREDENCE TO REPORTS THAT
UNITED LEFT IS IN SHAMBLES. THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR OF
BROADCASTS INCLUDES POSSIBILITY OF KING CONSTANTINE ADDRESS-
ING NATIONAL AGAIN ON LAST DAY OF CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES,
DECEMBER 8, ALONG WITH REPUBLIC SPOKESMAN FROM CU/NF.
PASOK IS ALSO SCHEDULED AGAIN DURING WEEK AND ROAYLISTS
HAVE MENTIONED SHOWING FILM CLIPS OF CONSTANTINE AND
FAMILY TO FILL REMAINING PRO-MONARCHY SPOT. OBVIOUSLY
NEITHER SIDE SUFFICIENTLY PREPARED TO EXPLOIT NEWS MEDIA
TO FULL ADVANTAGE AND NEW OPPORTUNITY PROVIDED BY TV HAS
NOT BEEN EFFECTIVELY UTILIZED.

5. ONLY DISTURBANCE DURING CAMPAIGN WAS NOVEMBER 29
"DUST-UPP" AT MONARCHIST HEADQUARTERS DOWNTOWN ATHENS WHEN
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GROUPS OF YOUTH IN EARLY EVENING THREW STONES, FRUIT AND
YOGURT AT ROYALIST OFFICES AND INJURED SEVERAL POLICEMEN
PROTECTING BUILDING. DEMONSTRATORS, MAINLY YOUNG MEN
LEFT OVER FROM RALLY FOR MAKARIOS IN AFTERNOON, TORE
DOWN CROWN AND GREEK FLAG AND HOISTED RED FLAGS WITH
HAMMER AND SICKLE AND RIGAS FERRAIOS SYMBOLS. GOG
ISSUED STIFF WARNING THAT IT WOULD DEAL SEVERELY WITH SUCH
DISORDERS AND POLITICAL LEADERS ISSUED STATEMENTS DEPLORING
OUTBREAK OF VIOLENCE. KUBISCH

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REFERENDUMS, FORM OF GOVERNMENT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 DEC 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: izenbei0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974ATHENS08596
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740348-1008
From: ATHENS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741269/aaaacgzc.tel
Line Count: 210
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: izenbei0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 MAY 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <15 MAY 2002 by elyme>; APPROVED <17 MAR 2003 by izenbei0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN ON MONARCHY ENTERS FINAL WEEK
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, GR
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005